

## **Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council**

Meeting Minutes

February 26, 2009

LMAS District Health Department, Newberry, MI

Meeting called to order by chair, Pershinske, at 6:30 p.m.

Secretary unable to attend, DenBoer to take minutes.

**Council members present:** Dick Pershinske, Steve Rodock, Lisa DenBoer, Glenn Moll, Mike Lawless, Jim Rutledge, Tom Buckingham, Nathan Fazer, Fred Gregg, Bill Becks, Dale DuFour

**Council members absent:** Brenda Owen, Steve Walker, Scott Hickman, Al Colegrove, Doug Scheuneman, Bob DeVillez, Jim Duke, Tom Schweitzer, Lester Livermore

**Adoption of Agenda:** Changed as follows: Insert item after approval of minutes – New Members. Delete a: under old business, resignation of Scott Hickman – No longer resigning. Amend item under old business, Terry Minzey to give Deer Management presentation as Kristie Sitar was unavailable. Add item under new business: Proposed new rules for taxidermy.

### **Approval of Minutes from 1/12/09 regular meeting.**

Motion by **DenBoer**, 2<sup>nd</sup> by **DuFour** to approve the minutes with corrections (italicized) : Change New Business sentence 2: “Regarding the current feeding and baiting regulations in Michigan, it was motioned by Colegrove and seconded by DuFour that “*It is recommended to MDNR that no changes to the baiting and feeding programs in the U.P.*”

Change to Public Comment: First sentence: “Jim Bratner (?), should be “*Jim Brettner*”, a Luce County ORV trail volunteer *representing Educate to Control Off Road Damage (ECORD)*, gave a presentation about their projects.....”

Ayes: All Nays: None

New Members were introduced. They are Tom Buckingham, Michigan Association of Timbermen, Luce County EDC, Luce County FireWise Committee, avid outdoorsman, trapper and hunter, Luce County. Nathan Fazer, Eastern Upper Peninsula Regional Planning, Chippewa County, interested in recreational planning, native U.P., also an outdoor enthusiast. Fred Gregg, Sault Area Sportsman’s Club, recreation and outdoor enthusiast, Chippewa County. Bill Becks, Board of Trustees of Sault Sportsman’s Club, Chairman of Ducks Unlimited – Chapter 20, Advisory Council for Lake Huron Fisheries, avid Outdoorsman, Chippewa County.

**Public Comment:** A private landowner, Rich Serfass, has concerns about the DNR Private Lands Forestry programs. They do not have a contact. It seems that DNR has shuffled its priorities to office/paper work – not outreach. Looking for stewardship planning with private foresters/land owners. Would like to see a proposal to initiate this

program again. Maybe get MACD, MSUE or MDNR forester. These organizations are recommended because they would have no financial interests or possible bias.

Response from MDNR Representative, **Mike Paluda**, CFM, stated that Rich is partly correct in his statement regarding shuttling services into paper work. State forests comprise only 20% of the states forested land area, while 80% are held by corporate or private owners. Private Land Forestry outreach/management is important. MDNR cannot utilize money from State Forest Land Sales to fund that effort. The legislature cut general fund money to support it. MDNR would like to do it, but the funding has been cut under the forestry division. The Wildlife division does some of it, but as a total picture, not just forestry. There is a presentation regarding some of the efforts coming up by Brian Roell, the wolf manager. Kevin Swanson is the contact for the Wildlife division out of Marquette at 906-228-6561.

### **Reports:**

Stacy Welling gave update including mission and goals and charter. Upcoming meetings of note are MUCC Deer Management Listening meeting on 3/2/09 from 6:30–8:30 pm at LMAS in Newberry. EUP and WUP CAC joint meeting on 3/19/09 from 6:30–8:30 pm in Marquette at Citizen Forum Room in Lakeview Arena. Budget Director will be there to discuss MDNR budget. NRC meeting on 3/27/09 at 6:00 pm. They will be deciding on crossbow recommendations at that time.

NRC update: Crossbow recommendations thus far are three different options. 1) Allow for any firearm hunting season for any species. 2) Or Allow for deer from 12/1 thru 1/1 in zone 3 – downstate. 3) Allow for 65 and older for any deer season type. Currently can use as a weapon of choice during firearm deer season (Nov 15-30) or if receive a permit for use due to disability.

Taxidermy regulation changes suggested in order to prevent/control disease: further define and add tag designations, cost of an additional \$100 for taxidermists, and 20 cents per tag for animals.

WUP CAC update: They met Monday. Discussed walleye stocking, asking for more in Iron and Dickinson county lakes. Discussed Non-industrial resource plan. Discussed quiet sports – possibly introduce user fees – i.e. cross country skiers. Discussed a License Plate Program to replace state park user passes, stickers. Would charge \$10 extra on all license plates when purchased or renewed tags and this would allow for entrance into all state parks including boat landings. Discussed a longer quiet period for bear season for non-dog users. Suggested that it begin on 9/15 through 9/24. They tabled discussion on ORV trail and ID signage.

### **Staff reports:**

- **Administration Facilities** has completed printing and updating new license regulations for all users. Will be available to the public on 3/1/09 and take effect on 4/1/09.

Customer service meetings have been had with all divisions in order that staff be informed as to how to answer questions on new regulations etc.

- **FMU** is currently reviewing policies and procedures for up coming fire season. Lots of training going on. The economy is impacting the department. The Legislation has removed general fund money to support fire management. It had already been reduced to 30% with the remaining revenue coming from timber sale money, totaling \$11,000,000.

Timber sales total \$30,000,000 for the entire state and are now designated to fund many other programs etc. Snowmobile season is winding down. There has been a marked decrease in traffic and users due partially to snow levels elsewhere being sufficient and partially due to the economy. Due to this fatalities are also down. The Drummond Island ORV designated route has been approved containing approximately 47 miles. A route is different than a trail. Routes are wide enough for 4x4 vehicles including trucks etc.

Trails are only wide enough for 50" or less. This route will include some mudding/hill areas. On April 14<sup>th</sup> from 1:00–5:00 pm and 6:00–8:00 pm the EUP geographic planning effort Public Meeting will be held for the management area concept. The Management Plan draft will be available with the “management area” outline. This will take place at the LMAS in Newberry.

A question from the public arose regarding the Drummond Island route regarding the mud holes/hill climbing. Will this be similar to the Mounds downstate? Glenn Moll responded: No, Mounds is an entirely enclosed area specifically for mudding, hill climbing etc. The Route simply contains areas along it that have mud holes or hills to climb.

- **Fisheries division** is on track with actions. Crew is busy repairing equipment and conducting committee meetings to plan for this season. Division is looking at management of Walleye and Pike species on a state wide level. In spring the field operations season will begin.

- **State Parks/Recreations** are in winter operations mode conducting equipment maintenance, building repairs etc. Preparation for summer staff (seasonal employees comprise 85% of department work staff) is under way. Tahquamenon State Park reservations are up for this time of year. Overall reservations are down 3.5% compared to last year at this time at a decrease of 15%. The old state ferry dock in Mackinaw City has a new harbor with slips. It is now a recreational harbor, fully modern to include anywhere from 25' to 100' slips. 8 small sky stream wind mills have been installed and it is anticipated that 40% of the harbor electricity will be generated from them. They came online last week.

- **Educational** programs management is doing way side exhibits and school programs at this time.

- **Wildlife Division** gave update on winter conditions and the severity to include snowfall averages way above average. The next six months will be critical – especially mid March regarding extreme/severe weather conditions detrimental to the deer herd. MUCC and the state are developing a new strategic deer management plan for the state. The Bear management plan is drafted and being completed. WUP CAC recommend the longer quiet period. The Consortium also made a recommendation that no hounds be allowed from 9/5 to 9/15. As a concession to dog hunters, the training season could open earlier, July 8<sup>th</sup>. Wolf monitoring and tracking survey is currently under way. Brian will get more detailed in his presentation. Budget shortfalls and staffing levels are effecting the department. The Sault area biologist is leaving and may not be replaced.

**Terry Minzey**, Wildlife division gave a power point/presentation on deer management and the new rules that were introduced last deer season. This was very informative. Baiting is the number one change mentioned that has contributed to the marked change in deer being harvested. The big question is, do we, as a state want bigger racks/bucks or

more bucks to be harvested. The U.P. is extremely unique, as it is the only area in which whitetail deer migrate. A round table discussion on this topic could take place in the future. Members stated that this would be a very good idea and should happen in the near future. A copy of the presentation is available through MDNR staff.

**Brian Roell** – Wildlife biologist and wolf manager for the UP gave a power point Grey Wolf Report. This too was very informative. The 2008 winter population is estimated at 508 grey wolves. Currently pups are suffering a 70% mortality rate. Packs seem to be established and new packs are not being observed presently. The 2008/09 winter study is being conducted now. Radio collars are currently on 40 animals. Can refer to the Michigan Wolf Management plan completed July 2008 for more information. Also a wolf management advisory group is going to be started. A copy of the presentation is available through MDNR staff. Brian's contact information is (906) 228-6561.

Discussion ensued regarding the proposed changes to allow for crossbows. Ultimately, a motion was made by **Rutledge** and 2<sup>nd</sup> by **DenBoer** to “endorse the use of crossbows for large game – deer, bear, elk (not to include small game) for firearm seasons including muzzle loader. Any hunter age 65 or older would be allowed use of cross bows in all large game seasons to include archery season. We do not endorse the use of crossbows during traditional archer season except for those 65 years of age and older and/or disability permitted use”. Ayes: **Rodock, DenBoer, Moll, Lawless, Rutledge, Fazer, Gregg, Becks**. Nays: **Buckingham, DuFour**. Chairman Pershinske opted as chair to not vote as the chair he is not obligated to do so. Motion carries. As per by-laws; a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote is required for recommendations. 7 of 10/11 (11 constituting a quorum, with 10 voting members) voted aye. Recommendation is therefore forwarded to the NRC for consideration. As per by-laws; dissention statements are allowed. **Buckingham** stated that for him it is a toleration issue. It is a personal choice issue and he supports personal choice. **DuFour** states that the recommendation motion had too many restrictions and that every one who utilizes a gun should be able to utilize a crossbow.

Member **Mike Lawless** gave a presentation on Land Management Assistance for Non-industrial private lands. Presentation included Michigan's Land Base handouts (addendum 1) and MDNR/MACD correspondence handouts (addendum 3). MACD is interested in taking over the vital role of assisting private land owners with forest management planning. The concept is to provide assistance in partnership with MDNR. Discussion ensued including funding support and if MACD is looking for funding from MDNR. Currently there is cooperation with and support of MACD foresters and a collaborative effort to work together with private land holders. The issue is funding. Three different plans/concepts have been proposed by MACD. MACD believes that license fees/permit fees should be increased and that with the relationships with land holders and MACD already established they could assist and help to get those fees raised. Rodock commented that Non-industrial private lands are critical. However, he is not sure that we can fully back a recommendation at this time. More information is needed. Motion by **Rutledge**, 2<sup>nd</sup> by **Rodock** to table a recommendation until the April meeting. Ayes; all. Nays None. Motion carries.

**Public Comment: None.**

Motion by **DenBoer**, 2<sup>nd</sup> by **Rodock** to table all other discussion items remaining on the agenda until the April meeting. Ayes; all. Nays; none. Motion carries.

Final Comments by EUP CAC members. **Pershinske** noted that Russ Mason is the new state wildlife division chief. Also, do we need to address supplemental feeding of deer? Are the current rules adequate? Are they over burdensome? Will address at the April meeting. Current rules are on the web site for review.

**DenBoer** thanked the staff and especially the presenters for this meeting.

Next meeting is March 19, 2009 at 6:30 pm with WUP CAC in Marquette at the Lakeview Arena.

Motion by **DuFour**, 2<sup>nd</sup> by **Rodock** to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m. Ayes; All. Nays; none. Motion carries.

Minutes Approved \_\_\_\_\_ . Secretary \_\_\_\_\_  
(April 16, 2009) \_\_\_\_\_ (signature)